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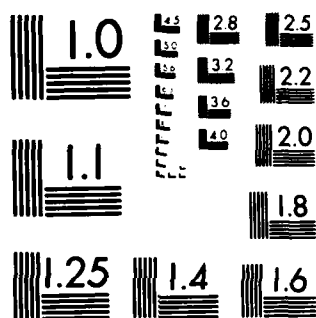
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TRINIDAD RESERVOIR SALVAGE
ARCHAEOLOGY, 1968

Colorado



AD A128255

National Park Service

Contract Number: 14-10-2:920-60

Stephen K. Ireland

Trinidad State Junior College

October 15, 1974

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INTRODUCTION

During the 1968 field season, archaeological exploration was conducted at four locales in the Trinidad Reservoir area. This investigation was conducted under a cooperative National Park Service--Trinidad State Junior College agreement, Contract Number 14-10-2:920-60. The field work, conducted as a field school, occurred between June 20 and August 2. The project director was Edwin L. Guilinger; the field supervisor was James P. Gallagher. The College designations for the locales excavated or tested are: TC:C9:102, TC:C9:185, TC:C9:186, and TC:C9:187. The investigational methodology utilized at these sites was the same as that used by Guilinger in 1967 (Ireland 1974c).

The 1968 excavational documentation (notes and maps), the collected specimens and an uncompleted interim report (Guilinger and Gallagher 1968) are the basis for this report. These materials were recently relinquished by Guilinger and their receipt is greatly acknowledged. The analysis of collected specimens is mine as is some of the interpretation. I was not personally involved in the field investigations reported here, nor was I able to inspect any of the uncovered archaeological remains. Every attempt has been made to accurately report the data although many of the details have undoubtedly failed to be transmitted.

The physical setting for the Trinidad Reservoir area has been previously described (Ireland 1974a).

The 1968 attempts to define archaeological manifestations, though careful and deliberate, were not particularly rewarding. The results of these investigations are reported here.

The designation TC:C9:102 was applied by Galen Baker to a large alluvial terrace on the south side of the Purgatoire River about 1½ miles southwest of Trinidad, Colorado and opposite the mouth of Colorado Canyon. The site, also known as the Messina Bluff Site, is bounded by Raton Creek and the Purgatoire on the west, by the Purgatoire on the north, by a small unnamed arroyo on the east and by low bluffs on the south. The coordinates are T. 33S, R. 64W, SW SW Sec. 23 and SE SE Sec 22. The edge of the terrace approximates 6,100 feet above sea level (about 40-50 feet above the flood plain); portions of the terrace rise to 6,160 feet above sea level. The majority of excavation was placed near the terrace edge.

Controlled excavation in 1964 occurred near the western edge of the terrace under the designations Areas A, B, C and D. These previous excavations by Baker have been reported by Ireland (1974b). Guillinger's 1968 excavation was placed about 700 feet northeast of the 1964 work, near the terrace's northern limits, in Area H. Other Areas were designated but not subjected to controlled excavation. The results of the 1968 Area H Investigations are reported here.

- Results of Excavation

Thirteen 5 x 5 foot grids were explored in 1968. The reason for selecting this locale is not known. The majority were excavated to a depth of 11 inches. Some diffuse evidence of aboriginal occupation was encountered at 5-6 inches below the soil surface (the lower limits of level 1) (Fig. 2). The evidence was primarily in the form of diffuse

Fig. 1

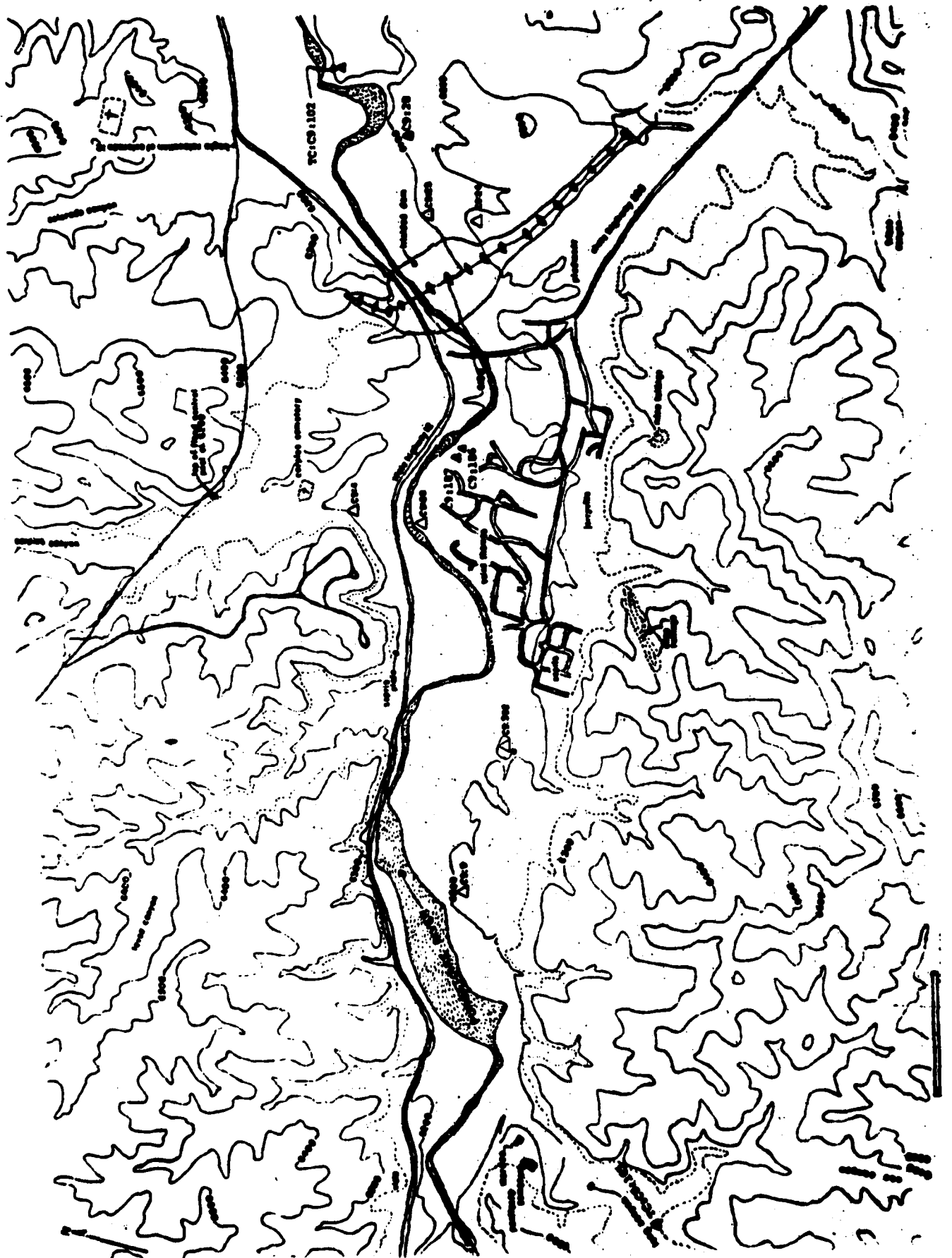
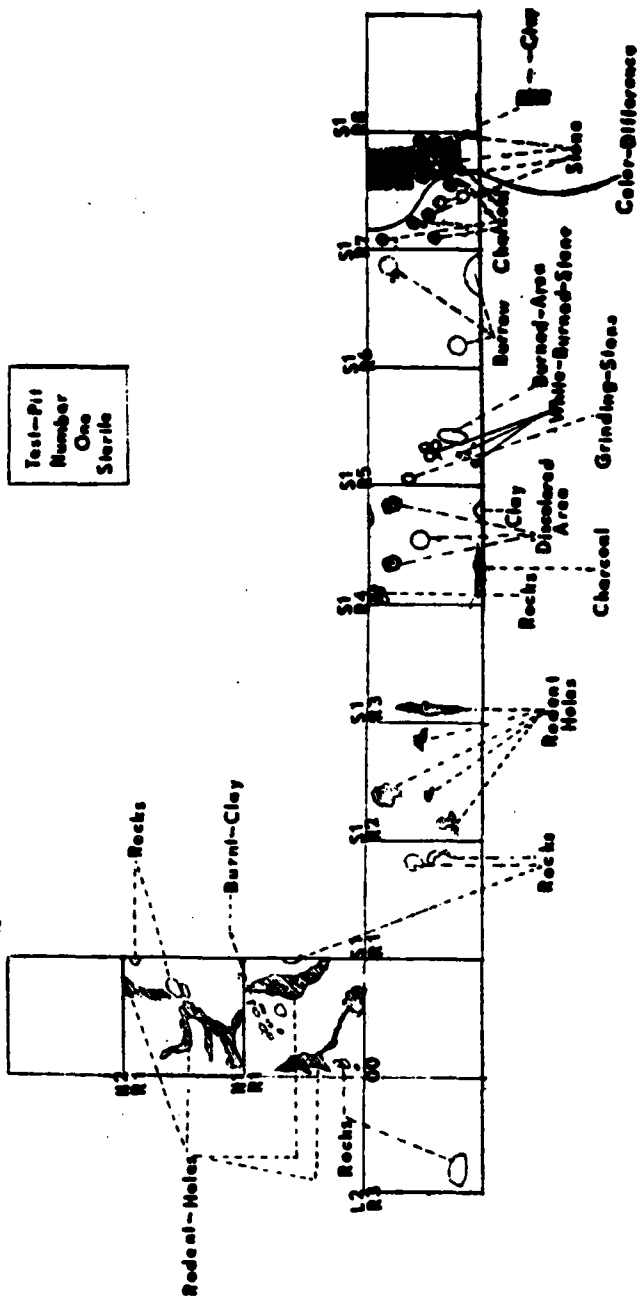


Fig. 2

MISSINA BLUFF (TC-CO-102) SITE **



**** From Guillinger and Gallagher (1968).**

charcoal and thermally altered clay which were presumed to represent architectural remains. Very small amounts of charcoal and clay were found as deep as 24 inches as were a few sherds. Disturbance by rodents may have been responsible for these lower manifestations. The scarcity of evidence for aboriginal occupation, including artifacts, prompted moving operations to TC:C9:28.

Artifacts

Only 25 artifacts can be attributed to Area H. Of these, 22 are ceramic fragments. These 22 have been placed in two classes: undecorated or basket-impressed. These two classes represent either locally manufactured Taos Incised (Peckham and Reed 1963) or Sopris Plain (Ireland 1973: 31-34). None of these 22 sherds display the attributes necessary to distinguish between these two indigenous ceramic types. The extreme similarity between Sopris Plain and Taos Incised of indigenous (Trinidad region) manufacture has been previously discussed (Ireland 1973). Regardless, both types can be positively associated with the Sopris Phase, A.D. 1150 to 1250 or 1300 (Ireland 1971). Fig. 3 shows the distribution of ceramic fragments at Area H including the single Cimarron Micaceous, A.D. 1750? to 1900? (Gunnerson 1969: 33-34). Sherds of this historic Apache type have been found elsewhere at TC:C9:102, especially Area A.

Figure 3
Ceramic Distribution TC:C9:102/Area H

| | Surface | depth unknown | 0-6 | 6-12 | 12-18 | 18-24 | Total |
|--------------------|----------|------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Undecorated | 7 | 8 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 18 |
| Basket-impressed | - | 2 | - | - | - | 1 | 3 |
| Cimarron Micaceous | <u>1</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>1</u> |
| Total | 8 | 10 | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | 22 |

The other three artifacts are: a bone awl fragment, a fragment of a stone pipe and a piece of abraded graphite. Each was recovered from Level 1 (0-5 or 6 inches). The awl was manufactured from a long bone of an unidentified large mammal. The pipe fragment represents a portion of the stem. Of unknown petrographic composition, it is a medium brown and has a maximum outside diameter of 2.6 cm. (larger than others from TC:C9:102). The graphite measures 6.7 x 3.3 x 2.3 cm. and displays six longitudinal abraded facets.

Conclusions

The evidence for aboriginal architecture, though present, was insufficient to define the nature of the structure. The ceramic collection from Area H is consistent with the collections from Areas A, B, C, and D in that historic Apache and prehistoric Sopris Phase is represented. The single Area H Cimarron Micaceous sherd is from the surface collection and may not be related to the occupation responsible for the underlying architectural remains. Based largely upon association with ceramics, it is believed that this evidence for architecture is of Sopris Phase origin. Regardless, it would seem likely that a definable structure still exists in the immediate vicinity of the excavation in Area H. The three non-ceramic artifacts from Area H are thought to be of Sopris Phase origin, but may be Apachean.

This site was located on an alluvial terrace on the south bank of the Purgatoire River opposite the mouth of Colorado Canyon and immediately west of the entrance of Raton Creek (Fig. 1). It was about 40 feet above the flood plain of the Purgatoire at an approximate elevation of 6,120 feet above sea level. The coordinates are T. 33S, R. 64W, NE NE Sec. 27.

Controlled excavation in 1968 began on a slight rise. Sparse cultural debris was encountered in the upper 3-5 inches; sterile yellow loam was found to underlie that strata. Attention was then turned about 60 feet northeast to a locale where a short line of stones was visible above the soil surface. Excavation revealed this line of stores to be the basal remnants of the west wall of a stone masonry house which has been assigned to the Sopris Phase. A total of 35 5 x 5 foot grids were excavated to the level of sterile soil (generally six inches or less). In terms of defined aboriginal culture, TC:C9:28 was the most productive site investigated in the 1968 field season.

Results of Excavation

Little of the prehistoric house remained in 1968. However, several positive statements concerning the architectural style can be made as a result of observation.

In plan the structure was nearly square: 16 x 17 feet (outside measurements). Interior measurements were nearly 14 feet less. The walls were incomplete; entire vertical segments were missing and no more than the second course was in place at the time of excavation. The majority of the discovered stores were sandstone which had been roughly prepared to the approximate desired size and shape. A few of the wall stones were erosion-worn granite. Mud was used as mortar but there was no evidence of its use as plaster. Each of the four walls was nearly straight with nearly square

Fig. 4

TC:C9:28

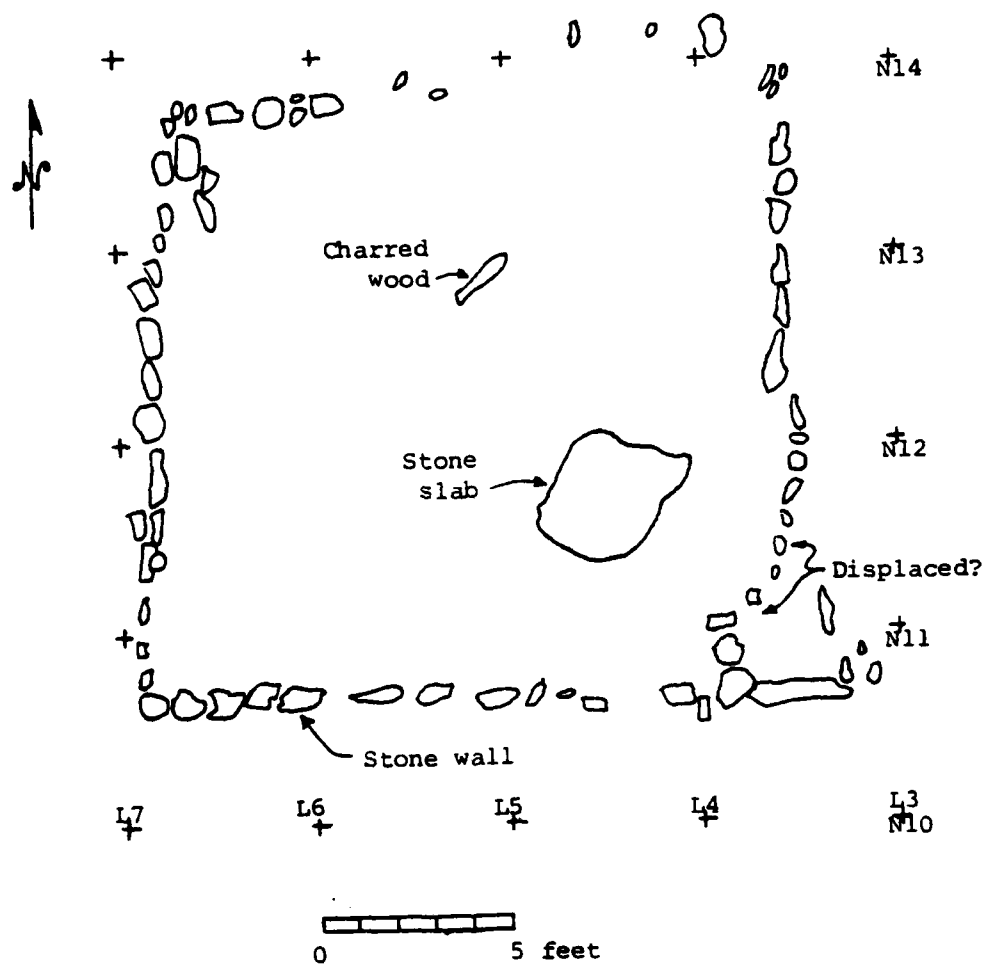
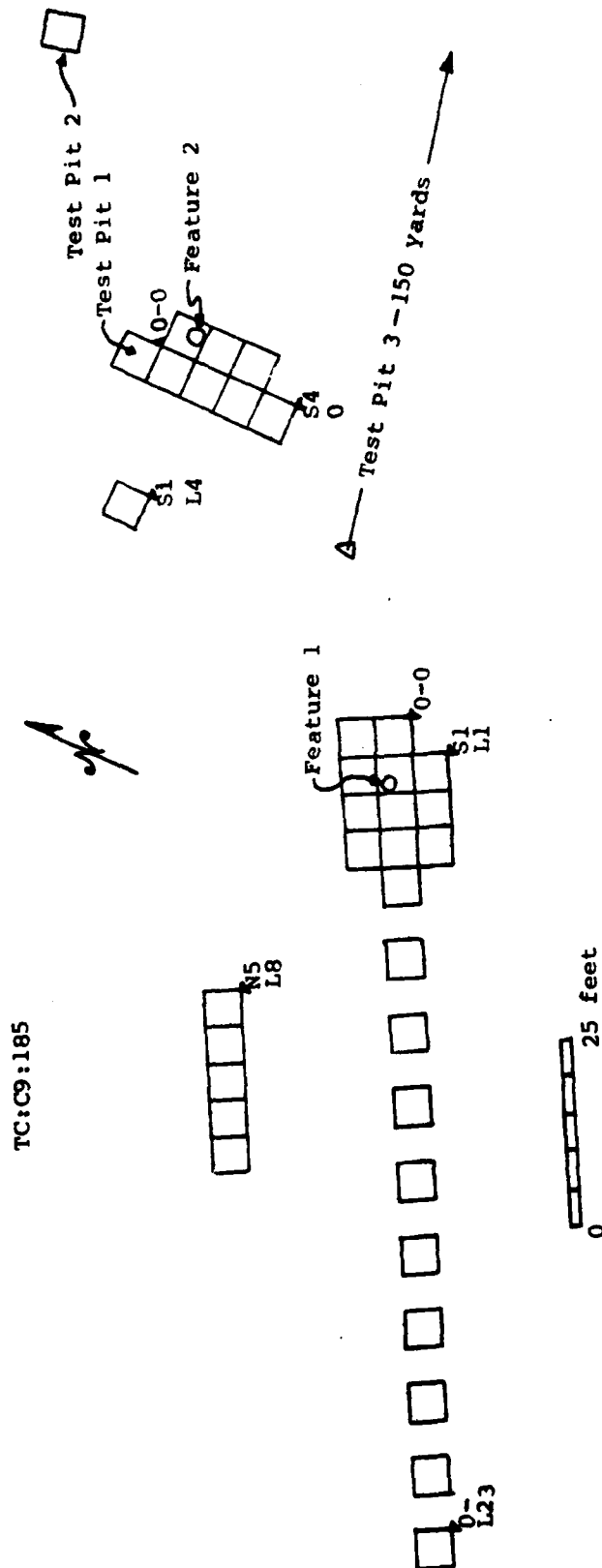


Fig. 5



corners. Original wall height was presumed to be 5-6 feet; the majority of the wall stones were presumed to have been removed in recent times. No entryway was defined nor were interior walls.

Evidence of roofing material was sparse and scattered throughout the house. This evidence consisted of small pieces of charcoal and thermally oxidized soil and a single piece of charred wood (21 x 5 inch diameter). Nearly all of this material was located on the presumed floor surface. That wood and earth were components of the roof seems apparent; its precise nature cannot be stated however.

The floor was presumed to lie directly under the burned roofing material and to have been unprepared earth. Combustion of the roofing material must have been nearly complete before it collapsed onto the floor surface was discovered (in Grid L5N12). No fire pits or subfloor pits were defined. The only floor feature was a slab of sandstone that was located on the presumed floor surface in Grid L4N11. Its maximum dimensions were 40.3 x 34.9 x 1.5 inches. This stone had been subjected to fire and 1968 field documentation labeled it a "cooking stone." Examination of this documentation, however, still leaves open the possibility that this stone functioned as a cover for an opening in the roof (entryway? or smokehole?). Architecturally this house most closely resembles TC:C9:144 (Ireland 1974a), but the scant evidence prevents detailed comparison to that or other Sopris Phase structures.

Artifacts

Seven ceramic fragments were recovered from TC:C9:28. Two of these are trade items and have been classed as Taos Black-on-white (Hawley 1950). Both of these were retrieved from the house fill (Grids L4N12 and L5N11). The other five are "body" sherds of indigenous manufacture, but cannot be positively typed. These five represent either Taos Incised (Peckham and Reed 1963)

that were manufactured in the Trinidad region or Sopris Plain (Ireland 1973: 31-34). Termed simply Undecorated, three were located in the house fill (two from Grid L5N11; one from L4N12). The other two were from outside the house at the comparable strata (Level 1): L3N11 and 00-R1. Both Taos B/W and Undecorated are diagnostic of the Sopris Phase.

Five projectile points were recovered from this site; other chipped stone artifact categories are conspicuously without representation. Two of the points are side-notched, two are corner-notched and one displays two complete corner notches and a single side notch.

S- Side-notched (total:2).
 C- Corner-notched (total:2).
 CAS- Corner-and Side-notched (Total:1).

| Type | Measurements | | in cm. th | Grid/Level | Basal outline | Material |
|------|--------------|------|--------------|------------|-----------------|-----------|
| | l | w | | | | |
| S | 1.7 | 1.9 | 0.3 | L4N11 L.1 | Slightly Convex | Quartzite |
| S | 1.2+ | 0.9+ | 0.2+ | 00-N2 L.1 | " " | Argillite |
| C | 1.9+ | 1.3 | 0.3 | L5N13 L.1 | Absent | Argillite |
| C | 1.9+ | 1.4 | 0.3 | ?? L.1 | " | Quartzite |
| CAS | 2.3+ | 1.3 | 0.3 | L5N13/L.1 | Slightly Convex | Argillite |

[A + indicates specimen is incomplete in that dimension.]

The ground stone artifacts are represented by two manos (one fragmentary) and two matate fragments. Both manos, though one is incomplete, are classed as one-handed (lengths less than an arbitrary 18 cm.). Each has a single pecked working surface. The metates are each sandstone slab with a slightly depressed but unpecked working surface.

U- Unifacial mano (total: 2)
 S- Slab metate (total: 2)

| Type | Measurements | | in cm. | Grid/Level | |
|------|--------------|-------|--------|---------------|--------------|
| | l | w | th | | |
| U | 7.3 | 11.2 | 3.3 | L5N15/Surface | Sandstone |
| U | 8.7 | 7.0 | 4.5 | L5N14/L.1 | Conglomerate |
| S | 18.6+ | 13.8+ | 1.9 | L4N10/Surface | Sandstone |
| S | 13.9 | 12.2 | 1.8 | L4N10/Surface | Sandstone |

The above 16 artifacts constitute the total site artifact inventory. Several categories (knives, drills, scrapers, bone awls, bone ornaments, etc.) which are common to Sopris Phase domiciliary structures are noticeably absent.

Conclusions

Investigation at TC:C9:28 revealed the remnants of a stone masonry structure. This structure and the artifacts in the site inventory have, with a high degree of confidence, been placed in the Sopris Phase, A. D. 1150 to 1250 or 1300 (Ireland 1971).

The method of wall construction in evidence at TC:C9:28 is consistent with other defined stone masonry houses of that Phase. Many of the architectural details were lacking, but the TC:C9:28 structure is reminiscent of the nearly square four-roomed Sopris Phase house at TC:C9:144. Perhaps interior partition walls existed at TC:C9:28, but were not defined.

Few artifacts were recovered from TC:C9:28. Numerous artifact categories were without representatives at this site: knives, drills, scrapers, awls and ornaments. These artifact types are rarely absent in Sopris Phase sites although their relative proportions may vary. The unrepresented artifact categories/relative scarcity of artifacts at TC:C9:28 may indicate: 1) the occupation of the house was of short duration, 2) the house was willfully abandoned, 3) it was not a domiciliary structure or 4) the house was only seasonally occupied. The first and/or second would seem the most likely possibilities. There is no positive evidence for the third. Regarding the fourth, there is insufficient data available to deal with the question of

seasonal vs. year-round occupation (the field specimen catalogue lists only six osteological items recovered, these specimens have not been analyzed and they have apparently been misplaced.) The recovered stone implements do point to an economy based upon hunting and gathering/horticulture, however.

The area designated as TC:C9:185 is located in Long Canyon about one half mile south of its entrance into the Purgatoire (Fig. 1). Long Creek is an intermittent stream and bounds the site area on the west and north. Oso Creek, also intermittent, joins Long Creek northeast of the site and forms the sites' east boundary. About 30 feet above the stream beds, the tested areas are at an approximate elevation of 6250 feet above sea level. Southeast of the area, bluffs rise to almost 6500 feet. The coordinates are T. 33S, R. 64W, SW SE Sec. 31.

The initial exploration of TC:C9:185 (also known as the Crowder Field Site) consisted of three 5 x 5 test pits. Subsequently, two separate horizontal grid systems were established (Fig. 6). Ultimately 37 5 x 5 foot grids were excavated to a minimum arbitrary depth of six inches. Two of these were excavated to a maximum depth of 30 inches.

Results of Excavation

The only archaeological features defined at TC:C9:185 were two fire pits. Feature 1, located in Grid 0-L1, was nearly circular (30 x 32 inches) and described as "filled with stones." The rim of the pit was discovered within one inch of the 1968 soil surface. The interior was a thermally-oxidized red. The actual depth of the fire pit was 6 1/2 inches. An estimated 75 stones were found within the pit; other contents were not listed. Feature 2 was 65 feet north-northeast of Feature 1 in Grid S1R1. It too was nearly circular but smaller (19 1/2 x 20 1/2 x 5 1/2 inches). The rim was 5 1/2 inches below the 1968 soil surface (near the bottom of the arbitrary excavational Level 1). The pits' contents were simply listed as chips, wood, no stones.

There was no evidence for a structure associated with either fire pit. No discrete use surface was defined in any of the excavated grids. The artifact yield was quite low. Apparently no osteological specimens were discovered.

Artifacts

Only four ceramic fragments can be attributed to TC:C9:185. One is locally manufactured Taos Incised and was retrieved from N5L11/Level I. The other three are either Sopris Plain or locally manufactured Taos Incised. Two were recovered from 0-L1/Level II (6-12 inches) and the third was from N1L13/Surface.

Eleven chipped stone artifacts are included in the sites inventory: one corner-notched projectile point, two projectile points or knives and eight utilized flakes. The corner-notched point is complete (1.8 x 1.2 x 0.4 cm.), of argillite and from N5L12/L.I. One of the points or knives is complete (1.7 x 1.0 x 0.3 cm.), is of quartzite, has a triangular outline with a slightly convex base and is from 0-S2/L.IV. The other is incomplete (1.6+ x 1.1 x 0.4 cm.), is of argillite, may or may not have originally possessed notches and is from N5L11/L.I. All eight of the utilized flakes are of argillite. None show signs of special preparation such as reduction of blade thickness. A single edge of each had been utilized as a knife. Three were from N5L11/L.I., two from 0-S3/L.I., one from 0-S1/L.I., one from S1R3/L.I. and one's exact provenience is unknown.

No other artifacts from other categories were recovered from TC:C9:185. A small piece of unworked graphite and a small piece of unworked hematite are among the collected specimens, however. So are nine argillite flakes and four argillite cores.

Conclusions

The ceramics demonstrate the presence of Sopris Phase peoples at the area designated as TC:C9:185. Well-defined cultural strata were not present in the excavated grids but the majority of the collected specimens were recovered from depths roughly comparable to one of the fire pits (Fig. 1). Thus it is believed that this fire pit and the collected specimens are of Sopris Phase origin. Certainly none of the artifacts are inconsistent with those known to be of that Phase. It would seem likely that an undiscovered Sopris Phase house exists in the vicinity of the excavated areas.

The stratigraphically higher fire pit (Fig. 1) is believed to be of more recent, but unknown cultural origin.

These designations were applied to adjacent locales on an alluvial terrace south of and overlooking the Purgatoire River. Their locations were approximately 2 1/2 miles southwest of the city of Trinidad. The approximate elevation for both was 6,150 feet above sea level. The two designations were separated by a small unnamed arroyo; TC:C9:186 was immediately east and TC:C9:187 was immediately west of the arroyo. The community of St. Thomas was situated southwest of the sites. The coordinates are T. 33S, R. 64 W, NE SE Sec. 28. Only evidence of recent non-aboriginal culture was encountered at both site designations.

Results of Excavation

At TC:C9:186 eleven grids were excavated to a minimum of six inches (one to a maximum of 24 inches). These 5 x 5 foot grids were placed adjacent to a line of stones visible above the 1968 soil surface. Investigation revealed that these stones were part of the foundation for a recent structure. Only artifacts of industrial manufacture (railroad spikes, glass, etc.) were associated with this foundation. Excavation was suspended at TC:C9:186 because of the absence of evidence for aboriginal culture. The plan and precise nature of the historic structure were not defined.

At TC:C9:187 five grids were excavated to a minimum depth of three inches (one to a maximum of 13 inches). These 5 x 5 foot grids were placed along the southern limits of a rectangular formation of stones visible above the soil surface. Excavation revealed that the stones were the foundation of a structure that measured about 12 x 14 feet. The only associated artifacts were of industrial manufacture (silverware, round nails, glass, etc.). Investigation at TC:C9:187 ceased when it became apparent that the archaeological manifestations were entirely non-aboriginal.

Conclusions

Excavation demonstrated the presence of recent modern structures and associated artifacts at each of these two sites. There was no evidence to indicate either structure was older than about 25 years. There was no evidence of aboriginal culture at either site.

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